

THE FIRST 24 HOURS OF THE YEAR OF PEACE

Draft Script

Part I

1986 has been proclaimed the Year of Peace by the United Nations.

What should we do to translate this important declaration into a tangible, successful project?

Needless to say, much has already been planned. It's a safe bet that the world's entry into the Year of Peace will follow a traditional enough pattern. Everyone will have his or her own ideas on how best to see the New Year in and will probably do so in the usual way, anyway.

But what if ...

-- My next-door neighbour and I will set up a brazier outside our house to treat passers-by in the street to pancakes made from the family dough, said a Moscow old-timer living in the Old Arbat pedestrian mall on being told about our idea;

-- And we will come to sing and dance *out* in the street, promised members of a folk song and dance group;

-- Why don't we ask Innokenty Smoktunovsky (a popular film and stage actor) to recite Pushkin's verses to a spontaneous audience of passers-by from the balcony of a house in Old Arbat from which Pushkin went to his wedding ceremony in a church in central Moscow;

-- Young film makers offered to recreate the atmosphere of an old-time movie house at Number 7 Old Arbat where Moscow's first cinema opened at the beginning of the century;

-- mimes and puppeteers warmed up to the idea of reviving

the old tradition of street theatre and jongleurs;

...and when the number of suggestions, proposals, ideas and the actual possibilities of their implementation went beyond the "geometric" confines of an old Moscow street it was decided to use the giant videoscreen in Kalinin Avenue that had been tested following its recent modernisation. The electronic "mirror" will reflect the fascinating mosaic of the joyous proceedings in Old Arbat that will convert Kalinin Prospekt into one huge auditorium.

Video engineers offered to set up colour monitors in the shop windows in Old Arbat to enable the participants in the "street show" who would fill the hairdressers' and barber shops (converted into dressing rooms for all comers), the flower shops and cafés (converted into old music salons) to see themselves "blown up" in the electronic crater of the video screen on Kalinin Avenue, thereby infecting members of the watching crowd there with a desire to experience the same thing themselves. They will be able to do ^{so} without much difficulty - a short stroll through any of the lanes connecting Kalinin Avenue with Old Arbat will take them to the "funfair world" of the pedestrian mall (getting out of it would be a more difficult operation as gift-selling stalls contributed by every republic in the Union, folk song and dance groups performing on open-air platforms will have a gravitational pull hard to break away from).

From time to time the giant videoscreen will announce the arrival of the New Year in yet another Soviet republic as it sends a direct TV signal to the videoscreen on Kalinin Avenue by

treaties to run to the end of the century. Alaska and Moscow, for instance, might conclude an agreement whereby just as the clock on the Spassky Tower of the Moscow Kremlin begin to strike midnight Alaska will send New Year greetings to the rejoicing crowd in front of the giant videoseen in Kalinin Avenue and Moscow will return the greetings twelve hours later when the New Year hits Alaska.

In the fifteen years remaining to the year 2000 a new generation will have grown up both in Alaska and in Moscow and the young people will know that on New Year's they will have the pleasant task to think up a surprise for their counterparts in the Western hemisphere that will make them feel happy. This is just a brief episode from the crowded programme of the seemingly endless 24 hours during which the nations of the world will be totally preoccupied with trying to come up with the most ingenious ideas designed to give joy and happiness to each other.

If we do this the outgoing year of 1986, proclaimed by the United Nations as the Year of Peace, will mark the dawn of a new "golden age" in which you and I, and our nations, will live in a world of friendly cooperation and harmony.

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